also going to threaten the five-year plan of India. He also pointed out that the Indians are convinced that the closure of the canal would be an imposition of economic sanctions on India more than Egypt. 159

India’s fears that Britain and France could use violence to achieve their political goals proved to be true. On October 29, 1956, Israel attacked Egypt. This attack was a part of a secret plan for aggression against Egypt. Three months after Egypt's nationalization of the canal company, a secret meeting took place at Sèvres, outside Paris. Britain and France enlisted Israeli support for an alliance against Egypt. The parties agreed that Israel would invade the Sinai. Britain and France would then intervene, instructing that both the Israeli and Egyptian armies withdraw their forces to a distance of 16 km from either side of the canal. The British and French would then argue that Egypt’s control of such an important route was too tenuous, and that it needed be placed under Anglo-French control. Soon, the British air force bombed Cairo and the French and British forces landed on Suez and Port Said. Nasser declared the Jihad from Al Azhar and the Egyptian people insisted on the resistance of the Tripartite Aggression. India stood by Egypt in the second chapter of the Suez crisis and fought defending Egypt diplomatically inside and outside the UN. The Indian support continued until the evacuation of the aggressive forces from all the occupied territories. India contributed to the peacekeeping forces that replaced the invading forces and the Indian forces role was highly welcomed by the Egyptian people.

Conclusion

India position towards the nationalization of Suez Canal was another case to find out what were India’s calculations behind its political support for Egypt. The Suez Canal has a special relation with modern India economically and strategically. The Indian strategic perception towards the Canal has changed drastically after 1953 favouring Egyptian sovereignty over the Canal Zone. The politics of cold war and Israeli-Arab conflict implications paved the way for the nationalization of the Suez Canal. This nationalization was seen as a challenge for the imperial hegemony over West Asia

and the act led to a crisis. Having a strong friendship between Nasser and Nehru as well as their meeting at Bironi just before the nationalization decision showed India as it was involved in the matter. The historical analysis proves that India was not involved in any way. Moreover, the Indian leadership hesitated in supporting the Egyptian decision of nationalizing the canal. India’s reluctance to support Egypt’s decision to nationalize the Suez Canal was the outcome of several factors, which were interrelated and interdependent at the same time. The genesis of India’s foreign policy, despite its public idealism, was to protect the interest of India before everything else, avoid international conflicts, any political risks, and its adherence to very large extent passivity in dealing with international problems. Indian diplomats tried to avoid taking any anti-British position.

Some Indian officials thought that it is dangerous for India that the Suez Canal could be controlled by an Islamic state because 80% of India’s trade passed through the Canal, and if Pakistan may agree with this Islamic state (Egypt), they may be able to obstruct the passage of Indian trade in the Suez Canal, or at least raise the fees on Indian ships, which will affect negatively the Indian economy. In the face of this Indian hesitancy, Egyptian diplomacy and leadership had been active to remove the fears of India and to win its support. It was due to the success of Mustafa Kamel in convincing the Indian officials that it was in the interest of India to support Egypt. Nasser’s correspondences with Nehru contributed to shift in Indian position from hesitancy in supporting the Egyptian decision to publicly supporting it and even coordinating with the Egyptian leadership about steps Egypt could follow to defuse the crisis.

At this point, the Suez crisis became the main concern for Nehru and his favourite issue to talk about in every meeting and include it in his speeches. Soon, India realized that both Britain and France are insisting on toppling Nasser, whom considered as not only dangerous for their interests in the Middle East but also dangerous for their entities as big countries. They also succeeded in convincing USA of their views. This fact enforced Nehru to stand in the other bank of the river and extend his support to Egypt. This helped largely in lightening the severity of the crisis as well as being considered a diplomatic victory for Egypt against Britain. Moreover,
India’s position influenced morally the position of US towards the crisis. India’s goal was to find “a middle way solution”.

India’s support to Egypt and its endeavours to enlist the support of other Asian countries was natural in light of India’s understanding of the real picture of the crisis. This picture became dominant on the decision-making centres in New Delhi and India understood the plan and what stood beyond it. It also estimated that the success of the Western plan would harm Egypt and India. This made Nehru shed his political weight beside Egypt. Nehru the Indian people and convinced them that the problem is directly affecting India politically and economically. He went to the extent of expressing fear for his people that the evolution of the crisis could threaten India with a famine.

However, India’s policy towards the nationalization of Suez Canal reflects the strong nature of Indo-Egyptian relations during years that followed the 1952 revolution and asserted the fact that both forged an “alliance for freedom”. India’s role was crucial in mobilizing the support of Afro-Asian countries for Egypt and even influencing to great extent the position of the US. India also denied Britain and France any success in isolating Egypt. The crisis proved that the bonds of fraternity and friendship with Egypt were deeply rooted among the different sections of Indian society and was not merely the invention of the leadership. Both Egyptian and Indian people were well connected emotionally in their struggle for freedom and independence. Egyptian people and leadership felt grateful for Indian support and realized that India was a genuine partner in this victory over colonialism.
CHAPTER FIVE

INDIA AND EGYPT: CULTURAL RELATIONS

This chapter presents an overall picture of Indo-Egyptian cultural relations during the period of study. It starts with a historical background and then attempts to answer some questions about the different facets of these relations. It is important to mention here that some questions have no perfect answers or even an answer at all due to lack of data or other methodological limitations. It will explore the institutional framework, which the two countries shaped to regulate and enhance their cultural relations through cultural agreements and treaties. This question would suggest more questions such as how these treaties have been implemented; and if there were any efforts by each party to introduce their local culture to the other by having cultural centers; translating and publishing books that enlighten masses of the real picture of each other? Did the exchange of scholars and students have an impact on shaping or reshaping the image of each other i.e. representing the culture of others, deepening the understanding of the political problems that each other face? Overall, what were the conditions of cultural relations between India and Egypt during Nehru era and where did its difficulties lie? To what extent the nature of political and economic relations between the two countries affected cultural relations. The conclusion will give an evaluation of these relations by attempting to answer these questions: did the two countries achieve their common cultural goals in pursuing their cultural relations with each other? If they were successful in achieving their goals, what were the factors that led to this success? In addition, if they failed, what were the causes of this failure?

The cultural relations are an important aspect of relations between nations. The condition of cultural relations decides if understanding or misunderstanding could prevail between two nations. Poor cultural relations and ties are the cause of many wars and conflicts when two states or nations fail to understand each other or misread the intentions of each other. In the same way, the lack of mutual understanding as
well as being self-centric in pursuing the interests of a state without considering the possibility of undermining the interests of other states leads to the clash of interests and then conflict. In 1962, M. Wahby, the then Arab League Representative to India, argued that “Political affinities may bring two nations together for some time, but only cultural relations, being unutilitarian, could do so on a solid and durable basis”\(^1\)

**India’s Cultural Diplomacy**

One of the main objectives of India’s cultural diplomacy in Egypt was to influence the shaping of its image among the Egyptians. During the period of this study, India’s image was positive due to different reasons. Among these reasons are the close relations between India and Egypt; both Egyptian and Indian press gave special importance to the news of their respective countries and the leading role of India and Egypt inside the NAM. According to R.K. Srivastava, the main objective of India’s cultural contacts with Egypt was to build up a favorable image in the Egyptian mind. This image has been suffering from negative impact because of India’s action in Kashmir and Hyderabad. \(^2\) India’s image already had positive colors. This was reflected how Egyptians came to appreciate Mahatma Gandhi and his role in serving the cause of humanity. \(^3\) Ramzi ‘Alam wrote in *Masr Al Fatat* newspaper that Gandhi was the messenger of peace and “one of the people, who took themselves so high to the level of saints and prophets”. He blamed humanity for the killing of Mahatma Gandhi and urged human kind to “expiate of their sin by making their souls free of evils and sins by following the road of Gandhi, road of good ... the road of peace”\(^4\). The press coverage of *Masr Al Fatat* on Gandhi was a part of a tendency that prevailed in the Egyptian press when it dealt with Indian affairs. They paid great attention to Indian news even before independence and this tendency continued in 1950s and 1960s. One example was that *Al Syasa* newspaper published many articles

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\(^1\) *Al Arab* (New Delhi), 15 September 1962.


\(^3\) For more details see El Sayed Mekkawi,”Image of India in the Arab world: Shapes and Shades”, *India Quarterly* (New Delhi), vol.62, no.4, (October-December, 2006), pp.152-190.

\(^4\) *Masr Al Fatat* (Cairo), October 1953.
on Mahatma Gandhi from late 1921 until July 1922.\(^5\) This was an expression of the close linkage between Indian and Egyptian freedom movements.\(^6\)

It could be argued that Islam was the main factor, which motivated Indo-Egyptian cultural relations. Although, religious connections between the two nations are very important, both Indian and Egyptian leaderships on the eve of independence expressed their desire to restore relations to the status, which prevailed during the Abbasids. Nehru recognized the Abbasid period as the golden era of Indo-Arab cultural relations. Islam brought India and Egypt together to the same cultural ocean that has been known as the Islamic civilization. One of the cultural outcome was Arabizing Egypt linguistically and the birth of Urdu as the language of Mughal elites.\(^7\) *Al Rawaq Al Hindi [Indian Wing] at Al Azhar* University is evidence of the close cultural relations between India and Egypt that existed during medieval times.

**Historical Background:**

The cultural relations between India and Egypt are as older as the other facets of Indo-Egyptian relations. Trade was the carrier of both culture and diplomacy between the two nations. The objects found during excavations indicated some traffic between India and Egypt as far back as 3000 B.C. The first cultural interaction took place in the land of Mesopotamia (Iraq). While there was no direct contact between India and Egypt, the similarity between the ancient Egyptian mythology and the ancient Indian mythology is evidence that cultural interaction took place. Both have many times been part of the same empire politically and culturally. India and Egypt were parts of Persian, Hellenistic and Islamic empires. Under the common rule of one empire, ideology, culture and trade were moving freely between the two nations to influence each other. The only exception was the rule of Britain as the British worked hard to prevent any direct relations between the two nations. This was a practical implementation of the imperial wisdom of divide and rule. Some historians believe

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5 *Al Syasa* (Cairo), 1921-1922.


that Aryans came to India from Minor Asia through Egypt and Iraq. This might explain the existence of some similarity between both ancient Egyptian religion and Hinduism. The examples of this similarity are too numerous like Osiris in ancient Egyptian religion; Ram and Krishna in Hinduism in terms of envisaging gods in the form of human body. Another common feature that brought both ancient Egyptians and Hindus together is the consecration of cow and river (Nile in Egypt and Ganga in India). Egypt has been mentioned in The Rig Veda many times. According to Kilidas Nag, “We, in India, consider Egypt to be our cultural brother through millennia. Among our Indus valley finds, we have discovered Egyptian objects of Art of the third millennium B.C. so our emperor Asoka the great, in the 3rd century B.C actually sent his cultural ambassadors to Greece and the Mediterranean world via Egypt (under Ptolemy) and Cyrenaica (under Magus).” The contemporary evidence suggests that Asoka had wells dug and rest houses constructed in the kingdoms of the Hellenic rulers of West Asia, including Egypt. The Buddhist mission of Asoka introduced Buddhism to the global elite of thinkers and scholars at Alexandria. In the Islamic era, intensive and constant cultural interaction resulted with free flow of ideas and trade among the different parts of Islamic world. This flow was going on for long time making Islam an active component of both Egyptian and Indian culture. This shows how the religious factor became a very important facet of the cultural relations between India and Egypt. According to Bint El Shatee, “These contacts [between India and Egypt] were further strengthened by the emergence of Islam which made India the third largest Moslem country in the world. India’s impact on the literature of the Moslem mystics was particularly strong” Another facet of this interaction was in the sphere of literature. This mutual intercourse led Egyptian and Arabs to take interest in Indian Literature. Some of best-known Indian works as Panchatantra, a book of fables, containing wise maxims was translated into Arabic and through it was introduced into the western world. Again, Hitopadesha or 'Good Advice' found its way to Europe through Cairo. According to Hussain Zaheer, It is known that, “the first organized attempt to import Indian science and technology was made by the

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8 Khaled Saif-Allah Ansari, 'elakat Al Hind bekolen men Al 'Iraq wa Mesr fe alosoor Al Kadima [India’s cultural ties with both Iraq and Egypt during ancient times], Sawet Al Sharq, September 1958.


10 Al Arab, 22 March 1964.

11 P.N. Chopra, “Cultural Contribution of India to the Arab World”, Al Arab, 15 September 1962.
Abbasid Caliph. Systematic translations of Sanskrit books on medicine, mathematics, astronomy and religion were made. By about 15th century, considerable political changes took place in India and the Muslim rule at least in considerable part of North India was established. Most of these Kingdoms which were established in India tended to patronize and absorb the Indian knowledge and wisdom and also became the main vehicles of translating Indian knowledge from Sanskrit to Arabic and Persian and transmitting it to other parts of the Arab world. They being patrons of the scholars, they also invited a large number of scholars from the Arab countries, who came to the country [India] and drank deeply at the fountains of Indian knowledge and wisdom. The Indian embassies which were sent to other parts carried with them scientific and technical books written in India and thus led to a greater dissemination of scientific knowledge.12

Both Indian and Egyptian scholars used to move freely between India and Egypt. Many of them were appointed at the royal court of Egypt or one of the royal courts in India. Other scholars preferred only to study and teach without involving themselves with Kings or Sultans. One example of this cultural mobility between the two nations was Al Sayed Mohammed Mourtada Bin Mohammed Al Bulgrami. He was famously known as Al Zubaidi among intellectual and scientific circles in the Islamic world. He was born at Bulgram in 1732 and passed away at Egypt in 1791. He was taught at the hands of Shah Wali Allah Al Dahlawi and other Ulamas of India till they give him "Egaza" [License] to teach Hadith (the sayings of Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him). He traveled to Zubaid, Yemen, seeking more knowledge. He stayed for long at Yemen. His works includes "Taj Al Arous" [The Crown of Bride] and "Sharh Al Kamous" [The Explanation of Dictionary] and "Sharah Al Sada Al Moutaqueen fe Ehia' ol oloom Al Din". He was a unique scientist in linguistics, Hadith, Sufism, and genealogy. He used to exchange correspondence with the kings of Yemen, Hejaz, India, Morocco, Sudan, Fazan and Algeria. He used to speak Turkish, Persian, Urdu and Arabic. Al-Gabrti, a famous Egyptian historian who witnessed the campaign of Napoleon Bonaparte to capture Egypt, was one of his students.13 Another model of cultural interaction between Egypt and India is Khawaja Emaduddin Mahmud Al Kilanni. He has been known also as Mahmud Gawan, Khawaja Jihan and the King of

13 Al Namer, Tarikh Al Islam fe Al Hind [The History of Islam in India], (Cairo, 1959), pp. 322-323.
traders. He served as a Minister for Humayun, the son of Aladdin Shah II (838-862), in Deccan. He received his education at Cairo in the hands of Ibn Hager Al Askalani. He left later to Syria and reached India when he was 43 years old. Gawan did not save his wealth but spent it in financially supporting intellectuals and Ullamas financially in all countries. He established a great Madrassa at Ahmedabad, Deccan. This Madrassa included a library, reading hall and a place for entertainment. 14 There was an incident when Mahmud Gawan invited twelve topmost scholars from West Asia to teach Indian students.15 The political authority has often patronized this cultural interaction between the two nations. One example of that is Mahmud Shah, the Sultan of Gujarat (1458/ 1511). He used to welcome Arab Ulama in his Court. During his rule, Gujarat was famous for its intensive study of Hadith. He hosted even some Egyptian scholars in his court. One of them was Galaluddin Bin Mohammed Al Malki Al Masri. He was born in 1452. It is not known when he joined the court of Mahmud Shah but he stayed at his court until the end of his life. He was known for his intellectual excellence and his contemporaries called him "Malik Al Mhadtheen" [The king of Hadith narrators].16 The Mughal era also provides more evidence on the scope of cultural interaction between Egypt and India. Taj Mahal is one example of this interaction. Egypt, among other West Asian peoples, supplied material and provided India with artists and artisans of very high caliber. Egyptian architects and engineers discussed the plan along with their Indian counterparts at the bidding of Shahjehan. All writers on the Taj agreed that two kinds of precious stones for the building were brought from Egypt and Iraq. These stones are Cornelia and Cat’s eye. However, more precious than the stones was the contribution of the artisans, greater number of whom were calligraphists but one or two appear to have made other contributions. One such person was Qadiruzzaman, who has been called by many writers' as master of many arts, but some regard that he was noted for his flowery writing. People from Egypt and the Arab World had executed all calligraphy on the walls.17

Fascinatingly, the impact of Indo-Egyptian cultural communication in the Mughal era is still alive today. A case of that is “Al Fatawa Al Hindyia” [Indian Fatwas].

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15 Al Arab, 1 September 1963.
17 Al Arab, 1 September 1963.
scholarly work has been written in the era of Aurangzeb. It is an encyclopedia of Hanfi Mazheb and written by a group of Ulama on the request of Aurangzeb himself. This work has been published in Egypt after one and half century of its appearance in India. This work was the base for reforming the personal law in modern Egypt. However, this cultural flow between Nile and Ganga did not go on without interruption. The British colonialism did its best to block every positive connection between India and Egypt. The British exploited their position in both Egypt and India to tighten their grip over the two peoples. It was only with the birth of the national liberation movement that the two people tried to restore some of their lost relations.

Europe was the place where some intellectuals and politicians from both countries happened to meet. In one instance, Iqbal met Mahmud Al Khodri, an Egyptian scholar, in Spain. The latter was conducting his research on Islamic law. Iqbal suggested his Egyptian colleague to read the works of Nasiruddin Al Tawsi. It seemed from their discussion that Iqbal was following the cultural debates in Egypt on the issue of constitution in the holy Koran. At this time, the issue of constitution attracted much attention from Egyptian / Muslim intellectuals and Faqihs after the abolishing of Khilafat at Turkey in 1924. During late 19th century and early 20th century, many Indian and Egyptian intellectuals and leaders met in Europe, Egypt and India. Jamaluddin Afghani moved between India, Egypt, Turkey and Iran. Sheikh Rashid Reda, an Egyptian Faqih, visited India. Sheikh Shibli from India paid visit to Egypt.

The independence of the two countries opened new horizons of their cultural cooperation. The national leadership was also very keen to restore the old relations that tied their own people with each other. In 1954, Jawaharlal Nehru invited Egypt and other Afro-Asian countries for consultation and discussions to adopt a collective policy towards UNESCO, which did give enough attention for the culture of the African and Asian countries compared to the efforts of the organization to spread

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20 Ma’awd, n.20, p.315.
Western culture. The post-colonial era saw both sides asserting their historical ties including the cultural one. Many eyes were looking to Malabar as an excellent representative of the historical social and cultural contact that took place between Egyptian/Arabs and Indians. Many Egyptian and Arab families settled there and carried so much of its original culture, tradition and values. This cultural linkage is still evident in how many people in Malabar (Calicut) are still interested in learning Arabic language. Sheikh Abdel Menhem Al Namer visited Calicut and met the family of Ali Raja Mariumma Beevi Thangal at Cannanore, who was the last ruler from Arakkal family. Arakkal kings came to power in 16th or 17th century and issued their coins at the earliest in the 18th century. They lost their power. According to Al Namer, this family of an Arab origin kept its royal tradition even when Al Namer was visiting them. Muslims in Cannanore used to call them the house of Sultan. Al Namer mentioned also that there are many Arab families at Calicut. One of these families was the family of Ba Faqih that considers itself as rooted to the family of Prophet Mohamed. However, both countries did not stop only on honoring their historical relation but went beyond that. Teaching Sanskrit language has been introduced in Egypt by the Institute of Eastern Studies, American University, Cairo, in 1953. Dr. Muhammad Hussein Heikal, an Egyptian minister, intellectual and philosopher visited India in 1953 to attend a conference on the philosophy of Gandhi. Heikal met Nehru and C. Rajagopalachari during his visit. He also paid a visit to Aligarh Muslim University where he interacted with its faculty. They complained to Heikal the decline of Arabic studies in India and expressed their wish that the Egyptian government may deputize some Arabic teachers to their university. Heikal admired the modesty and devotion of the Indian leadership for the cause of developing India and securing its independence. Such visits made it possible for the Egyptian and Indian intellectuals to identify the common challenges that face their nations. Some Egyptian academicians saw much similarity in the challenges that face the scientific renaissance in both India and the Arab world. For example Dr.Ibrahim

22 Al Namer, n.14, p.65.
24 Al Namer, n.14, p.68.
25 Sawet El Sharq, February 1953.
26 Muhammad Hussien Heikal was a novelist, journalist, and lawyer, member of the Senate, Minister, Islamic writer and critic. See Sawet El Sharq, January 1953.
27 Sawet El Sharq, January 1953.
Helmi Abdel Rahman wrote in Al Thaqafa [Culture Magazine] that, “The problems of scientific renaissance in India are so similar in many ways to the problems which face us in Egypt and the Arab world. I think that such similarity would motivate us to study India’s scientific renaissance to enable us learning how they solved these problems. It would be also beneficial to establish scientific ties and cooperation between us and the modern Indian scientific civilization.” During her visit to Egypt in October 1949, Madam Krishna Huttsingh, sister of Nehru suggested the increase of mutual visits to enable Indian and Arab women to understand each other. She also called upon Eastern countries to increase their exchange of women delegates and scholars in order to create an atmosphere of understanding and solidarity among the women of East. She added that such atmosphere would bring prosperity for the East and the world. She welcomed the comprehensive development that took place in Egypt and the Arab world.

Thinkers and Reformers

The interaction and exchange of ideas among the Egyptian and Indian reformers and thinkers is one of the most fascinating aspects of the Indo-Egyptian cultural relations. The similar developments in both countries produced similarities in ideas and wide exchange of them. There are many examples in this regard. According to Gamaluddin Al Ramadi, both Tagore and Zou Al-Noun Al-Masri were always mixing between nature and Sufism. Zou Al Noun (8th century) used to intimate with solitude that brought him close to his God and filled his soul with real spirituality while Tagore wrote his “Chitra” among Indian forests. Reformers in both countries sometimes followed the same path of reforming. The Egyptian thinker Anwer Al Gendi pointed out that there was similarity between Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan and Sheikh Mohammed Abdu. It was their belief that it was in the interests of the Muslims to have peace with British and to learn their sciences. The model of Mohamed Abdu, in resisting the Western dominance, has been followed also in India through establishing charitable

28 Sawet El Hind, 1 September 1949.
29 Sawet El Hind, 15 October 1949.
30 Sawet El Sharq, June 1958.
associations where Islam and Arabic were taught. Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan in India, Imam Bin Padis in Algeria, and Mohamed Qasim Nanotawi in Deoband, India have followed this model. One of the Egyptian thinkers who visited India was Dr. Omer Farouh who noted how the British let India suffer from illiteracy as they did with Egypt. He pointed out that, “Colonizers do not want to educate the sons of the colonized countries; and if colonizers would be enforced to teach the colonized people, it would teach them what harm them, not what benefit them. Therefore, it is not strange to know that when the British left India illiterate people were 88% of the Indian population, which amount for 400 millions. Indians who can read their local languages were not more than 12% of the population. Only 2% of the population managed to speak English … illiteracy is one of the heritages of colonialism to be left in every occupied country”,

There was a case also when an Indian thinker did affect the political and educational policy of Egypt. He was Sardar Pannikar, India’s ambassador to Cairo, who played an important role in bringing both close to each other politically. Pannikar’s discussions with Nasser and other leaders contributed to great extent in Egyptian adherence to non-alignment policy. Nasser ordered that the book of Pannikar titled “Asian and Western dominance” to be translated into Arabic and distributed among the members of the revolutionary council. Later, Pannikar’s book was published widely. The influence of Pannikar as a historian was far reaching. In 1958, the Ministry of National Guidance constituted committees to rewrite the Egyptian national history. Mohamed Abdel Fatah, an Egyptian historian, quoted the view of Pannikar that the right history is the history of people. Accordingly, Abdel Fatah urged History committees to rewrite the Egyptian history based on the civilization development of Egyptian people, its ideologies, ideas, social ties and the impact of other civilizations on it. It is interesting to note that these views has been followed in the rewriting of history text book in the following years; one of the text book of history was titled “The struggle of Egyptian people” that narrate the history of the Egyptian resistance against occupation and corruption during the long history of seven thousand years.

32 ibid.
33 ibid, pp.87-88.
34 Sawet Al Sharaq, May 1958.
Egyptian cultural diplomacy has been shaped because of how Egypt perceives itself and its identity. Egypt was aware of its cultural role both regionally and globally. In its regular letters to the Egyptian missions abroad, Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EMFA asserted that Egypt has “a very prominent position and high prestige in cultural arena whether internationally or in the Arab and Islamic world”. EMFA requested its missions to keep students and scholars who did study in Egypt in touch with the Egyptian culture and to preserve their intellectual and spiritual ties with Egypt as they are the messengers of Egypt and the best to reflect the real image of Egypt in their countries”. ³⁵ On the other side, India paid attention to its cultural relations with Egypt as a part of its overall policy towards the Arab and Islamic world as a whole. Egypt was – and still – is the cultural gateway to the Arab world. According to R.K. Srivastava, “India considered its friendship with Egypt as key to the success of its policy toward Muslim world in general and Arab world in particular. Friendship with Egypt meant a vindication of India’s claim as a secular country which was not affected by narrow considerations of religion in national and international affairs.” ³⁶ However, developing Indo-Egyptian cultural relations was a common goal for both Egypt and India. A.A.A. Fyzee, India’s Ambassador to Egypt, told the press on September 1949, which he would strive to strengthen cultural and economic ties linking India and Arab Middle East on a broad permanent basis. ³⁷ Ismail Kamel Bey, Egypt’s First Ambassador to India, stated in October 1948 that as of now India and Egypt enjoyed full freedom and they “must strive for the closest cooperation in every field political, economic as well as cultural”. ³⁸

However, developing strong cultural relations was not the concern of diplomats only but it concerned intellectuals. One of these intellectuals was Sheikh El Namer. He wanted to see an active role to Al Azhar linking India and Egypt culturally. He noted that, “The scope of Al Azhar in India and the Islamic countries is so wide and open. Al Azhar will provide great service to Muslims and Arabs if it gets the necessary

³⁵ Regular letter No.120 from Culture Division, MFA, Cairo to Egyptian missions abroad, File No.1/2/9, Mahfaza 1201, ASGMFA, Cairo.
³⁶ Srivastava, n.3, p.243.
³⁷ The Hindu, 2 September, 1949, cited in Srivastava, n.3, p.244.
³⁸ The Hindu, 18 October, 1948, cited in Srivastava, n.3, p.244-5.
fund. Al Azhar scholar, who understands his mission, can be a people ambassador to his country whenever he goes. I see that Al Azhar should work together with Islamic conference to strengthen ties with religious and scientific circles in India through establishing many cultural centres, accepting more students who are willing to join Al Azhar University, sending Arabic books to religious institutes in India, and inviting some Indian Ulama to visit Egypt in order to strengthen relations”. 39 Bint El Shatee, a famous Egyptian writer, who paid a visit to India in 1964, pointed out that, “Indeed Indo-Arab contacts offer a suitable subject for prolonged and intensive academic research” 40. The implementation of such idea came in 1965 when the Department of Political Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad proposed to take up an intensive research project on Indo-Arab Relations in the Twentieth century. The project was intended to provide the policy makers with a factually accurate data on the growth of Indo-Arab relations. 41

Cultural Cooperation

Egypt and India sought to guarantee their desire to develop their mutual cultural relations in a form of treaty. They signed the first treaty to regulate cultural ties at Cairo in October 1958. R.N. Nehru, India’s ambassador to Egypt signed on behalf of India and Mahmud Fawzi, Egyptian foreign minister, signed on behalf of Egypt. Fawzi said that the treaty is one of the most important treaties that Egypt signed with India. According to R.N. Nehru, the treaty would further strengthen old-aged cultural ties and it would cement friendship and understanding between the two countries that have common problems and interests. 42

The duration of the treaty was ten years and the executive programme to implement it was to be reviewed every three years. The treaty allowed the two countries to exchange students, lecturers, scientists in every discipline. It also gave each country the right to establish cultural foundations in the other country. The treaty enlarged the scope of cultural interaction to cover the exchange of dance troupes, exhibitions,

40 Al Arab, 22 March 1964.
41 Al Arab, July-August 1965.
42 Sawet El Sharq, October 1959.
orchestras. It also encouraged national institutes to establish chairs for Indian studies in Egypt and Egyptian and Arab studies in India. The latter idea was a long due demand by different Arab intellectuals. Today, this treaty is still the cornerstone of cultural ties.

**Tools of Cultural Interaction**

It is difficult to identify clearly and comprehensively the tools of cultural interaction between two nations. However, it would be appropriate to explore some of the main tools that have been used to enhance cultural interaction between India and Egypt.

**a. Seminars and conferences**

The common similarities in literature created a mutual interest among intellectuals and academic circles in India and Egypt. This mutual interest reflected itself in many seminars that have been organized. Indian literature attracted the attention of the Egyptians among other Asian and African literatures. During a seminar on Asian-African literatures, Khalil Gerges Khalil gave a talk on Indian literature and its sources. This was followed by a seminar on India. Modern literary association organized this seminar and invited Mohamed Kamel Hussein, a professor at the faculty of Arts, Cairo University and former cultural attaché of Egyptian Embassy at New Delhi, Sheikh Abdel Menhem Al Namer, Maulana Abdullah Masri, the representative of Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Hind, and Zahir Masoud Quraishi, an Indian student of Political Science. Both Prof. Zaki Naguib, an Egyptian philosopher, and Dr. Suher Qalmavi, Head of Arabic Department, Cairo University and popular writer, represented Egypt in the Tagore Centenary International Literary Seminar held at Delhi from November 11 to 14, 1961. The symposium on "What India Owes to Arabs and What Arabs Owe to India" held in Vigyan Bhavan on September 1, 1962, was a remarkable evidence of the cultural inter-penetration between the two nations. Prime Minister Nehru's speech and Dr. Maksoud's address were both inspiring and

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43 *Sawet El Sharg*, October 1959.
44 *Sawet Al Sharg*, May 1953.
45 *Sawet El Sharg*, April 1958.
46 *Sawet El Hind*, June 1958.
47 *Al Arab*, 1 December 1961.
stimulating. Tara Chand and Maqbool Ahmed presented two papers. In his paper; Chand shed sufficient light on hitherto unknown mutual cultural debt. It seems the growth of political relations had its positive impact on how the Egyptian intellectuals looked at India. For example, Aisha Abdel Rahman (1913-1998), known as “Bint El Shatee” [The daughter of the beach], who visited India in 1964 to participate in the World Orient lists’ Conference, appreciated India’s position vis-à-vis Al Aqaba Strait issue. Aisha commented to Al Arab magazine that, “The Positive and quick response of India in defense of the Arab stand regarding any aggressive attempt to divert their waters unilaterally is a further indication of India’s commitment to truth. Such response would not have come so spontaneously without the age-old contacts between the Arab and the Indians which enabled them to understand each other’s problems without long-winded explanations or diplomatic campaigns.” New Delhi saw also many Egyptian scientists who came to attend the symposium on the science and the nation. They met with Zakir Hussein, India’s Vice-President in a reception that was hosted by the Arab League office.

b. Arab Culture and Studies in India

While both parties often held conferences to discuss common aspects of their culture and causes that concern them, Arab studies in India were a part of a constant effort on the side of Indian scholars to absorb, learn and understand Arab culture. This was the outcome of different factors. Among these factors are the deep historical relations, the geographical proximity and the religious affinity. In addition to that was the consciousness of the Indian leadership of an urgent need to restore cultural and political bridges between India and the Arab world. A sketch of these efforts could be drawn. Nizam of Hyderabad paid special attention for the cultural relations between his state and Egypt. He deputized many scholars to join Al Azhar University and Cairo University. His administration used to order many of the classics and textbooks, which educational institutes need, for teaching Arabic and Islamic studies. In this

48 Al Arab, 15 September 1962.
49 Aisha is the first women to teach at Al Azhar Mosque. She authored more than 20 books in different Islamic topics and Arabic literatures. She holds different chairs of Arabic and Islamic studies in different Arab universities.
50 Al Arab, 22 March 1964.
51 Al Arab, 1 September 1964.
regard, Osmani Encyclopedia Directorate / or also know as the Eastern Prints House played an important role in spreading Arabic culture. It reprinted many of the rare Arabic manuscripts in history, literature, language and Holy Koran’s commentary. For example, it published the Law of Mas’oudi in astronomy, the book of Ibn Koutyba titled “Al Ma’ani Al Kabira” [the Great Meanings], and the book of Ibn Doryad titled “Gamaharat Al Loghat” [the Collection of languages] and other important works. The institute along with its scholars has been highly appreciated by different international institutes of Arabic and Eastern studies. Many Indian scholars contributed greatly to revising and publishing Arabic classics. India established the Institute of India and Middle East for cultural Studies in Hyderabad. This institute aimed to explore the cultural roots for both India and West Asian culture. After two years of its establishment, the institute issued two volumes; one deals with the cultural history of India and the other deals with the culture of West Asia since 650 A.D. Many other institutes in India carried out research as well as teaching Arab and Islamic studies such as School of International Studies, JNU, the departments of West Asia and Islamic Studies at Aligarh Muslim University, Mysore University, Osmania and Calicut University and other universities where Egypt was taught and researched.

On the other side, Indian studies in Egypt were limited to Urdu studies. At this early stage, few Egyptian and Arab authors wrote about Indian affairs, among them were Mahmoud Al Aqqad and Georgi Zidan. The academic study of India continued to be done by Urdu specialists like Al Sadati and other scholars who visited India like Sheikh Al Nemer.

52 Sawet El Hind, 22 August 1955.  
53 Thaqafatulhind, June 1952.  
54 For the contribution of Indian scholars in poems see Thaqafatulhind, March 1953; for the contribution of Indian scholars in Hadith see Thaqafatulhind, March 1953; Abdel Menhem Al Namer, “Alwan men Al Thaqafa Al Arabiya fe El Hind” [Colors from Arab Culture in India], Sawet El Sharq, July, 1958; El Namer, “Shaksyat men EI Hind Sahamet fe Nasher Al Thaqafa Al Arabiya” [Figures from India, who contributed to the spread of Arab culture], Sawet El Sharq, August, 1958; Tara Chand, “India’s contribution to Arabic culture”, Al Arab, 1 October, 1962.  
55 Sawet El Hind, April 7, 1957.  
56 It was only during 1990s that Faculty of Political sciences and Economics started a centre for Asian studies. This centre was actively involved in studying Indian affairs and organised many conferences about south Asian affairs. Prof. Mohammed Sayed Salim was very instrumental in conducting this academic affair. This era also saw the establishment of the Institute of Asian Studies, affiliated to Zagazik University. The institute still needs more specialists and access for books relevant to its arenas of research.
There were also books and pamphlets published by the Indian Embassy at Cairo to enlighten Egyptian elite and public on different Indian causes. Indian embassy published and sometimes contributed in publishing books and pamphlets that deal with topics like the liberation of Goa, Kashmir, India and the Suez crisis, India and Palestinian cause, India and the Middle East, Our Friends in the battle: India and the 1967 crisis. The Egyptian press did justice in covering Indian affairs on a regular basis. There was also a reasonable movement of translation for books related to India. Notably, Indian embassy used to provide the Egyptian national house with books and the Egyptian universities with many books about different aspects of Indian affairs, history, economy and literatures. The first to teach Urdu in Egypt was Mohamed Loqman Sidiqi. Sidiqi was an Indian national who studied at Al Azhar Mosque and was staying at Al Rawaq Al Hindi (Indian wing where Indian students used to live). He taught Urdu at the faculty of Arts, Cairo University. Sidiqi was from West Bengal and his son married an Egyptian women. Sidiqi published the first book in Arabic on Urdu grammar in 1962. Later, Samir Abdel Hamid, an Egyptian scholar of Urdu, edited the book and published it in Lahore, 1978.

c. Role of Al Azhar

It could be argued that Islam is one of the main factors that shaped Indo-Egyptian cultural relations. Al Azhar brought both Egyptian and Indian scholars to one cultural forum. It was in Al Azhar that many Indian scholars studied and taught. Al Azhar used to keep special hostel for the Indian scholars. The name of this hostel was “Al Rawq Al Hindi” that means “the Indian Wing”. No doubt, that those religious connections between the two nations played a very important role, but the fact remains that the aspirations of both Indian and Egyptian leaderships on the eve of independence on restoring the relations to its golden status, which prevailed during Abbasids, were not fulfilled. Abbasid era was always recognized as golden era. It

57 The library of the Faculty of Arts, Ain Shames University has a good collection on Indian affairs but the most recent books on this collection have been printed on 1960s.
58 Researcher's interview with Abdel Majid Habib Allah, an Indian teacher of Urdu at India’s Cultural Center at Cairo (MACIC) and announcer at Cairo Radio (Indian Languages Division), Cairo, 6 November 1998; Samir Abdel Hamid Ibrahim, *Al Qawa’d Al Asasyia Le Drasat Al Urduya* [Basic grammar for the Study of Urdu], (Lahore: 1978).
saw the highest degree of scientific and cultural exchange between India and the Arabs.

Sheikh Shibli Al No’amani visited Egypt in 1891, and got impressed by the reforms at Al Azhar University and the religious schools in Egypt, which bring new schools that combine both the study of religion and the study of modern sciences; and follow the structure of modern school. These reforms were the fruits of Imam Mohammed Abdu’s ideas. He tried to implement them. Al Mubarak followed the reforms of Imam Abdu and established Dar-Ul-‘loom [the School of Sciences] that later became later a part of Fuad I University (Cairo University now). Mohammed Abdu led the reforms at Al Azhar University. He adopted a new attitude in reforming the Islamic society. Abdu preferred reforming the society from within through education and adopting the positive facets of the Western modernity instead of reforming from above through revolution. Mohammed Abdu has tried along with Jamal al-Afghani to reform from above but their efforts did not succeed. Al-Afghani formed an important cultural and political link between India and Egypt. Al-Afghani’s views on religious and social reforms found expression in the writing of many eminent Indian Muslim leaders. Urabi Pasha implemented the strategy of Afghani through his rebellion against the western intervention in the affairs of Egypt but his failure led to the occupation of the country in 1882. Zaghlul Pasha was one of the students of Imam Abdu. He led the Egyptian revolution of 1919 and championed the constitutional and political struggle against British. The educational reforms of Mohammed Abdu influenced Shibli No’amani. The political ideas and the model, which Zagloul Pasha represented, influenced Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan and Mahatma Gandhi. The outcome of this influence in the field of education was the establishing of Naduat-ulumma of Lucknow and Madrassat Daru-‘oloom. These schools produced great scholars that shaped the Islamic thought in India like Abul Kalam Azad, Sulyman Nadvi, Abdel Majed Dorybadi, and Abdel Bari Nadvi. Another disciple of Imam ‘Abdu, who contributed

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59 For more details on the role of Imam Abdu see Richard Gottheil, “Mohammed Abdu: Late Mufti of Egypt”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 28, 1907, pp. 189-197.


61 When Sheikh Al Namer visited Daru-’oloom in 1950s, he found that the school was still using the old syllabus that was used in Egypt in the time of Imam Mohamed Abdu. See Sawet El Sharq, June 1958.

62 Al Gendi, n.32, p.87.
to Indo-Egyptian cultural relations, was Sheikh Rashid Reda, (1865-1935). Reda is
the founder of Salafiya Movement in Egypt. He visited India in 1912 and presided
over the 1912 session of the Nadwat al Ulama at Lucknow. On his visit to India, he
was hailed as a savior of Islam and won a number of followers.

Both Sheikh Mohammed Abdu and his disciple Sheikh Rashid Reda also influenced
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. While commenting on the Azad’s explanation of the
meanings of Al- Fatiha Sura (The Holy Quran, No.1), Sheikh Abdel Menhem Al
Namer pointed out that Azad “has chosen for himself the way of free research;
name himself Azad to express his intellectual freedom during his life. He was
influenced by, Sayed Jamaludin Afghani, Sheikh Mohammed Abdu and Rashid
Reda”. In addition, Sayed Tirmizi wrote also that Abul Kalam Azad came under the
influence of Sheikh Mohammed ‘Abdu’s movement and the articles of Rashid Reda
in Al Manar. These article fueled the enthusiasm of the Arab world against the British
occupation. The views of Abul Kalam have been followed in Egypt and sometimes
became a part of the internal intellectual debate. One example of that was when Abul
Kalam gave his liberal views about the position of women in Islam and its right of
equality with man in public life and assuming leadership position even in the
military. The views of Abul Kalam appear to be contrary to the views of the
Egyptian Grand Mufti who restricted the role of women in parliment. However, the
reaction for Abu Kalam’s views came from Pakistan. Massoud Nadvi argues that
Maulana Abul Kalam lost touch with the Muslims in India since 35 years. However,
the criticism was so weak and it did not deal with the debatable issue. Nadvi’s
criticism seemed more personal and political than scholarly argument.

In the same way, many in Egypt were influenced by Mahatma Gandhi’s struggle
against British. Nasser used to follow up the developments of Indian national struggle
for freedom and admired both Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru. Fatehi Radwan, an
Egyptian Minister of state was fond of Mahatma Gandhi’s ideals. He decided to share

64 Manorama Misra, n.63, p.2.
65 Ehab Hefzi Ez-Al-Arab, “Al Tarjama wa Dawraha fe Taafa’l Al Hadral” [Translation and its role in
the interaction among civilizations], A draft paper presented at the International Conference on
Civilizations, Al Azhar University, Cairo, 13-25 June, 1998.
66 Al Wadi (Cairo), 6 June 1952.
67 Menbar Al Sharq (Cairo), 11 July 1952.
that love with the rest of Egyptian by translating the biography of Mahatma Gandhi, which has been composed by the French novelist, biographer and Nobel Prize laureate Romain Rolland. 68 In 1936, a group of Al-Azhar scholars decided to send a delegation to India69 to promote intellectual and scholastic cooperation and to promote closer educational and cultural bonds with India. It was also aiming to contact Islamic universities and academic institutions in diverse parts of India in order to promote cultural cooperation.70 The delegation consisted of four senior members of the venerable Islamic university: Ibrahim El-Gibali, Abdel-Wahab El- Naggar, Mohamed Ahmed El-Bedawi and Mohamed Habib.71 Al-Azhar mission paid a visit to Mahatma Gandhi in Wardha on 2 March 1936. The Mahatma was clearly delighted by the visit and he told the delegation leader, “If you hadn't made this call I would have had to scold Al-Azhar.” In the course of the long conversation that followed, Gandhi presented the delegation with a block of sugar, which, he said, the Indians made from the sap of a certain type of palm tree. In presenting it he said, “This keep sake will help you understand my principles. The tree was once useless to us, but now we have succeeded in extracting sugar from it and, therefore, no longer have to buy it”.72 The delegation visited Bombay, Delhi, Rampur, Aligarh, Amritsar and Hyderabad where it interacted with intellectuals and academicians. The delegation paid great attention to their visit to Hyderabad as it had close relations with Egypt because it regularly sent students to Al-Azhar and other Egyptian Universities and because it had a 30,000-strong Arab community. The delegation noticed that Ali Khan, the seventh in line of the Khan dynasty, was an ardent promoter of Islamic studies and the study of Arabic language, literature and culture.73 After concluding the visit, the delegate declared that they had been successful in "establishing bridges between religious and secular scholars". It recommended establishing "cultural and information centers in various locations, such as Surat in the state of Bombay, Dakafi in Bengal Minor and Nagaur in central India". It further recommended that Al-Azhar invite five untouchables to complete their religious studies in Egypt, furnish financial aid to the League of Ulama in exchange for which that society would accept 20 untouchables into its religious

68 See Fatehi Radwan’s interview with Sawet Al Sharq, February 1953.
71 ibid.
72 ibid.
73 ibid.
education programme, and to offer financial aid to the Islamic Association in Nagaur to enable it to open new classes for outstanding students from the untouchable community.\textsuperscript{74}

In this context, the Indian Government requested the Sheikhdom of Al Azhar on September 1948, to deputize a mission of Al Azhar Ulama to India to teach at the Indian Muslim Schools the real message of Islam: moderation and renaissance.\textsuperscript{75} Anwar Al Sadat, the then General Secretary of Islamic Conference and Egypt’s president (1970-1981), visited Dar al-‘Ulum of Deoband. He appreciated the efforts of the Ulama in spreading the message of Islam. Sadat gifted the institute 3000 books and donated amount of Rs.20000 for the Institute. He also deputizes two of Al Azhar scholars to teach Arabic literatures to the students of this institute.\textsuperscript{76} The two scholars were Sheikh Abdel Menhem Al Namer and Sheikh Mohammed AbduAl ‘Akbawi to teach higher studies at Dar al-‘Ulum of Deoband, U.P. The delegate visited different Islamic institutes and boards everywhere in India. For example, they visited Kerala. They spent more than one year in India. The delegates helped in convincing these institutes to modernize its programs of study and incorporate modern sciences in its syllabuses. The delegate noticed that both Muslims and non-Muslims were welcoming them and showing their interest to know about the Egyptian affairs.\textsuperscript{77} This was reflecting the spirit of religious tolerance among Indians. Al Namer also appreciated the spirit of love, tolerance, simplicity and modesty among Indian people.\textsuperscript{78} Their visit also helped India in countering Pakistani propaganda over the status of Indian Muslims. According to the delegate, “Indian Muslims live in complete harmony with other sects and contribute happily in serving their country”. The delegate also added that their visit to this dear country [India] convinced them that all Pakistani propaganda, which they heard about the ill-being of Muslims conditions, is mere propaganda without any basis of realities.\textsuperscript{79} They also visited Lucknow where they watched the Shia Muslims celebrating the day of Muharram at Imambara (Hussaynia). Sheikh Abdel Menhem Al Namer appreciated the attention,
which was given in the past by the Nizam of Hyderabad to the Islamic sciences and Urdu.\textsuperscript{80} The delegate also visited Bihar and appreciated how India is paying attention for the study of Buddhism. They visited the Buddhist temple of Nalanda along with Shah Mohamed Aziz, a Bihari Minister.\textsuperscript{81}

Indian graduates of Al Azhar used to join different institutes for teaching Islamic and Arabic studies. They followed the same system of Al Azhar in teaching and organizing their school. The Higher Madrassa of Calcutta was one example of that tradition.\textsuperscript{82} The same month saw also New Delhi celebrating the millennia anniversary of Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Masudi\textsuperscript{83}, who died in Cairo in September 956. Al-Mas'udi's travels actually occupied most of his life from at least 915 until the end of his life. He also traveled to the Indus Valley, and other parts of India, especially the western coast.\textsuperscript{84} As a part of celebrating al-Masudi’s anniversary, India organized an exhibition of rare manuscripts and research works related to al-Masudi.\textsuperscript{85}

\textbf{d. The Role of ICCR}

The leadership of free India was aware of the colonial design to isolate the colonized peoples apart of each other in order to weaken each of them and prevent any solidarity among them against their common enemy: the colonial powers. India and the Arab world were very clear victims of such policies. Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were keen to restore India’s cultural relations with its old cultural and civilization partners. To achieve this end, New Delhi organized a conference on 21 September 1949 to draw the principles and guidelines of a council, which would conduct cultural cooperation between India and other countries. The ambassadors of Egypt, China, Afghanistan, Iraq, Indonesia and other diplomatic representatives participated in the proceedings of the conference. The Conferees agreed on the creation of a cultural council to strengthen cultural ties between India and the Asian countries. The council would supervise two divisions; one division to take care of

\textsuperscript{80} Al Namer, n.14, p.357.
\textsuperscript{81} Al Namer, n.14, p.56.
\textsuperscript{82} Sawet El Sharq, January 1958.
\textsuperscript{83} Sawet El Sharq, January 1958.
\textsuperscript{84} URL < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Masudi > (Accessed on 24 August 2008)
\textsuperscript{85} Sawet El Sharq, January 1958.
India’s cultural ties with Egypt, Turkey and Afghanistan; and the second division would manage India’s cultural ties with China, Japan and Korea. This council would arrange the exchange of students, professors and journalists. It also would organize regular exhibitions for Arts and industries. 86 During the conference, Maulana Azad, India’s Minister of Education, asserted the importance of cultural ties in supporting the relations among countries and bringing it together. He also drew a historical picture of India’s friendly relations with its neighbors and suggested that the best way to strengthen cultural relations is to establish people’s board of intellectuals that would bring intellectuals from each country together. Ismail Kamel Bey, Egypt’s ambassador to India urged the Asian countries to accelerate strengthening its cultural relations with each other. He also suggested that India should start bilateral talks with each of the countries that took part in this conference to establish an organization to achieve this goal. 87

f. Students Exchange

The idea of students exchange was proposed by India in 1948 starting with the exchange of three students from each side to study at the universities of each other. According to Sayed Hussein, Indian ambassador to Egypt, “The Government of India decided to exchange scientific and cultural missions with the Egyptian Government. India will send a number of its students to Egypt every year to study and get closely familiar with the Egyptian civilization and culture. The two governments will also exchange lecturers in different disciplines in order to establish strong understanding between the two peoples” 88

Dr. Abdel Razeq Al Sanhori, Education Minister of Egypt welcomed India’s initiative. Egypt decided to depute three students of the graduates of Fouad I University (Cairo University) and Farouk I University (Ain Shames University). One of the three students was assigned to study the tropical medicine, the second was to study Islamic art of India, and the third student was to study Indian philosophy. The students were to be sponsored jointly by both Governments; Egyptian students got a monthly salary of 10 E.L and India was paying them monthly allowance of Rs.200,

86 Sawet El Sharg, 1 September 1949.
87 ibid.
88 Al Ikhwan Al Moslmeen (Cairo), 23 October 1948.
which was equal to 15 E.L. Among the Indian students who were in Egypt early 1950s was Mohiddin Al Aloui of Malabar, India studied at Al Azhar University. Mohiddin wrote a book on Arab Islamic centers in India.

The years 1949-1952 saw more than 150 foreign students receiving their study in India under scholarship from the Indian government. In the academic year 1949-1950, 56 scholarships were awarded and the next academic year saw 52 scholarships being granted. During the academic year 1951-1952, India increased the number to 70 scholarships. The value of the 70 scholarship was Rs 396,000; India spent Rs 180,000 for scholarship during the years 1949-1951. Egyptian students were among the foreign students who received those scholarships. Priority was given to post-graduate studies but also scholarships were offered to students, where graduate studies were not available or well advanced. During their study in India, it took care of them and some tours were organized for them to visit different areas of India. They were also encouraged to learn Indian languages. The stipend given to each student was Rs.100.00 per month and the fees of study covered by India. In 1954, India offered one scholarship to an Egyptian student to join institute during the academic year 1955/1956. The value of each scholarship was Rs.200. Egypt deputize Sudanese students to study at India on the expenses of the Egyptian government. For example, Ambroz Roll, a Sudanese student, has been deputized by Egypt to study in India. The Egyptian Embassy, New Delhi, provided him with his financial needs, as the procedures to arrange for his fund would take time. The Indian Government offered two post-graduate scholarships in any discipline including medicine for the Egyptian citizens to join the Indian institutes during the academic year 1958/1959, in order to strengthen Indo-Egyptian cultural relations. The monthly scholarship for each scholar was Rs. 200. India selected two scholars from among 12 scholars to be nominated by Egypt for these scholarships. The same was repeated for the academic year 1959/1960. Some Egyptian students participated in the summer camp of foreign students that took place at Kashmir in 1958. Krishna Menon visited the camp in

89 Al Ahram, 4 October 1948.
90 Sawet El Hind, 15 May 1952.
91 Sawet El Hind, 1 February 1952.
92 A letter No. 54 (Secret) from Egyptian Embassy, New Delhi, to African Division, MFA, Cairo, 31 March 1958, File 40 (New Delhi -1), Mahfaza 337, ASGMFA, Cairo.
93 Sawet El Hind, June 1957.
94 Sawet El Sharq, September 1958.
Kashmir and answered students' questions on international affairs. He praised UAR and the courage of its people in their struggle to preserve their independence and international peace. The General Governor of Kashmir visited the camp along with his wife and interacted with the students. The Chief Minister of Kashmir also paid a visit to the camp and invited them to have tea in his house.95

Moreover, one of the Indian scientists was Azad Sobhani who spent some time in Egypt and enjoyed a very high reputation among the intellectual circles there. Dar Al Sharq Al Awsat honored him in May 1947, before he left to India where many Egyptian intellectuals and scientists participated in honoring him.96 Sayed Ahmed was another Indian scholar who did his PhD at Ain Shames University on the area of Arabic literatures. His thesis was on “Ali Mahmoud Taha among the contemporary poets of Egypt”. Sayed Ahmed graduated in Arabic from Patna University.97 Large number of Egyptian students who studied in India became cultural ambassadors of India in Egypt. They played a crucial role in subsequent years when there was enormous goodwill for India despite not having close political ties.

The Areas of Study

Egypt tried to send many students to study which of vital interest for Egyptian development. As an agricultural country, many students were sent to study agriculture. Egypt enjoyed long coast in both Mediterranean and Red Sea in addition to the Nile. Fish was a very popular food and an important source for the economy of the country. The study of fish has been targeted and Egypt sent some students to study fish culture and fish rising in India, for example, Abdel Qader Hamza Ibrahim was sent to study this subject at Central Inland Fisheries Institute, Parrakpare, and West Bengal. 98 Many Egyptians were sent to study agriculture in India. Saleh Hassan Farag joined Plant Pathology Department at Tamil Nadu University, Coimbatore. The Tamil Nadu University nominated his thesis on Sugarcane Mosaic disease for the

95 Sawet El Sharq, August 1958.
96 Al Ahram, 29 May 1947.
97 Sawet El Hind, 22 December 1954.
98 The File of Abdel Qader Hamza Ibrahim (who arrived in India in 18 September 1977), The Archive of Egyptian Cultural Bureau of New Delhi (AECBN).
award of Jawaharlal Nehru Prize for agricultural sciences. Philosophy also was the subject of PhD for Ahmed Ezat Abdel Latif who completed his PhD from Visvabharati University. Soon after he came back to Egypt, Abdel Latif was appointed at UNESCO Division at the Egyptian Ministry of Education. Another Egyptian student studied rural development at Delhi school for social sciences. On the other hand, the number of foreign students who were studying in Egypt in 1958 amounted 7,479 from 45 countries including India.

The Egyptian students played an important role in introducing Arab culture in India. The Cultural Bureau of UAR (Egypt and Syria) used to send UAR newspapers and magazines to the students of UAR, in India in order to use it as tool of informing Indians about the UAR and circulate it among the circles of Arabic learners and speakers. Once these materials included the magazines of AlTalba Al’Arab [Arab Students], Benaa Al Watan [the Magazine of Nation-Building], Arab Review, the book of President Gamal Abdel Nasser titled The Philosophy of the Revolution, and the Press Release of UAR Press Office in New Delhi.

Away of home, the Egyptian students used to face a lot of problem while they came to study in India. Some of these problems were bureaucratic or climatic or academic. The Indian Ministry of Education and Social Welfare used to deposit the salary of the foreign students at the account of the institute/ university where the students pursue their studies.

99 A letter from Saleh Hassan Farag to Cultural Councillor, Embassy of Egypt, the File of Saleh Hassan Farag, 20 February 1976, AECBN, New Delhi.
100 Sawet El Sharq, December 1955.
101 Sawet El Hind, 8 March 1957.
102 Sawet El Sharq, March 1958, the researcher did not come across sources that indicate the number of Indian students in Egypt during the period of study.
103 Letter No.69 from Dr. Mohamed Riad Aletr, Cultural Attache, the embassy of UAR to Mr. Sobhi Ibrahim Fahmi, an Egyptian Student, 6 February 1962, the File of Sobhi Ibrahim Fahmi, AECBN.
104 Letter No.154 from Dr. Mohamed Riad Aletr, Cultural Attache, the embassy of UAR to Mr. Sobhi Ibrahim Fahmi, Egyptian Student, 22 March 1962, the File of Sobhi Ibrahim Fahmi, AECBN, New Delhi.
105 A letter from Abdel Qader Hamza to Cultural Counselor, dated 29th October, 1979, the file of Abdel Qader Hamza, AECBN, New Delhi.

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Indian publicity in Egypt

Egypt has been the political and cultural heart of Arab and Islamic world. Both India and Pakistan were competing in winning Egyptian mind and heart by investing much in publicity. Few Indian magazines were published in Arabic. These magazines propagated Indian political views about different issues such as Goa, Kashmir, and Hyderabad. It also covered most of developments in Indo-Egyptian relations. These magazines included Al Haqayeq, Sawet Al Hind and Sawet Al Sharq. Al Haqayeq (Facts) is an Arabic literary and scientific magazine that was published from Madras and later from Hyderabad. Ali Belgrami and Abu Trab Mohamed Abdel Gabar Khan used to issue Al Haqayeq every three months. The issues of Al Haqayeq used to reach Egypt. The main goals of this magazine were to introduce Arabs and their civilization to the Indian society, especially, the learners of Arabic. 106 Another magazine was Sawet Al Hind Magazine [The voice of India]. Egyptian newspapers welcomed Sawet Al Hind for its completion of three years of journalism in Egypt 107 Sawet El Hind was a link between the Arab readers and India. It happened once that Sawet El Hind appealed for the Arab readers to send their letters, which were received by some of them from Mahatma Gandhi, to Gandhi Memorial Foundation in order to be copied and returned back to its owners. 108 It also provided the service of “Pen Friend” to bring both Indian and Arab youths together. 109 Sawet Al Hind used to review books that dealt with issues related to India such as Gandhi’s economic policy 110. It also reviewed books that favored India’s views on political issues. For example, Sawet El Hind reviewed and praised the book of “Al Kotla Al Islamyia” [Islamic Bloc] for Rashed Al Barwi. 111

India sponsored another Arabic Magazine called “Sawet Al Sharq”, which appeared for the first time in October 1952. Ahmed Qasim Gouda was the chief-editor of the new Magazine. Later, Gouda was appointed the chief-editor of Al Goumhoryia, the voice of the new revolutionary regime in Egypt. The objective of Sawet Al Sharq

106 Al Haqayeq (Hyderabad), vol.4, October 1890; vol.2, July 1890.
107 Sawet Al Hind, 15 July 1952.
109 Sawet Al Hind, 15 October 1952.
110 Sawet El Hind, 15 October 1952.
111 Sawet El Hind, 1 August 1952.
was to strengthen relations among Eastern nations. According to Ahmed Qasim Gouda, the chief-editor of *Sawet Al Sharq*, “If *Sawet Al Sharq* can contribute with modest efforts in strengthening the ties of cooperation between Arab bloc and Asian bloc as a tool to establish the quested international peace, the magazine would be successful in accomplishing its mission completely”. During the period from 1952 to 1955, *Sawet Al Sharq* covered wide scope of issues both political and non-political topics. It introduced Indian literature to Arab readers. It gave review for many scientific and literary books. It gave space for great writers like Mahmoud Abbas Al ‘Akad and showed its interest on local issues. *Sawet Al Sharq* was recording regularly and closely the developments of Indo-Arab relations. In 1955, *Sawet Al Sharq* decided to gift 5000 free subscriptions for readers in Egypt and Sudan who paid 15 Piaster instead of 30 piaster in return for a book from *Sawet Al Sharq* and free subscription for one year.

Besides magazines, India used one more tool to inform the Egyptians and the Arabs about India. It’s “Hona Delhi” [Here Delhi] an Arabic broadcast division of All India Radio, which is still functioning and designed to strengthen Indo-Egyptian/Arab relations, according to the director of the Arab Division of All India Radio, “India gave a high priority to its Arabic broadcast because of its cordial relations with the Arab world. These relations dated to the deep past when the Arab sailors were visiting India and its coasts to carry out its spices and precious goods to the world market. Cultural and commercial ties between India and the Arabs were cemented during the vicissitude of history” Hona Delhi introduced many attractive and interesting programs to appeal for Arab masses. The opening program would be reciting the holy Qur’an. Hona Delhi also presented also special programs on the occasion of religious festivals or ceremonies; for example, it presented different programs on the occasion of Ramadan like “the talk of Ramadan”, “Al Misahrati”, Ramadan soiree; it also presented a program on the festival of Eid El-Fitr among the Indian Muslims.

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112 *Sawet Al Hind*, 1-5 October 1952.
113 *Sawet Al Hind*, October 1955.
114 *Sawet Al Hind*, October 1955.
115 *Sawet Al Hind*, 15 June 1949
116 *Sawet Al Hind*, 15 June 1949
117 *Al Mahabharata* is a very famous and popular character during Ramadan. His duty is to wake Muslims up to have their late dinner (Sohor) before Fajr (Dawn). This character has been celebrated in Arab literature and drama.
also offered a special program on celebrating Eid El-Jihad in Egypt. Hona Delhi broadcasted some programs for children like “Child Corner” that portrayed some famous Arab characters such as Sindbad, Antra Bin Shadad and Al Shater Hassan. Other programs also were “Nehru Speaks” and “Stories from India”. The stories on those programs had both real and imaginative characters. Hona Delhi also targeted Arab women where few programs were designed to attract women, such as “Your House”, “Lebanese Women” and “Your Beauty”. Some interactive programs were offered also such as “Our Mail”, “What Listeners ask for”, “Ask us and we will Answer You”, “The Questions of Listeners” and “The Corner of Listeners”. All these programs would necessitate the Egyptian and the Arab listeners to interact with Hona Delhi through writing questions or asking for special songs to be broadcasted. Music and songs were the majority of Hona Delhi’s broadcasting data. Hona Delhi offered a program that introduced the music of each Arab country such as “Night in Egypt”, “Night in Iraq”. It also presented the recorded concerts of different Egyptian singers such as Oum Kalthoum, Mohamed Abdel Wahab and Mohammed Abdel Motleb. The songs of Egyptian movies were aired like the songs of “Al Aish wa Al Maleh” [Bread and Salt] for Na’aima Akef, a famous dancer and actress. National, international and historical music were played such as the music of national Mozmar, the dance music of Pharaoh as well as Indian and Western music. Hona Delhi has also broadcast Egyptian and Arab folklore. The monologues of Aziz Ali, Shokoko, Al Gaizawi, Ismail Yassin, Na’aima Akef as well as the Iraqi and Lebanese Mawaaweels [folklore] were among the folklore; Hona Delhi has aired these monologues. Hona Delhi did not neglect the literary movement in Egypt and the Arab world but it gave it special attention. It reviewed some short stories such as “Noor Allah” [The light of Allah] by Ibrahim ‘Amer. It offered some talks with literary figures from India and the Arab world; for example, it broadcasted the talk of the Indian writer Esmat Sugatha. One program presented the literary renewalists such as Mahmoud Taimour and Tawfik Al Hakim. Some novels were criticized in different programs.

It also introduced Indian poets for the Egyptian and the Arab listeners such as Rabindrnath Tagore. Other Indian writers have been introduced also. Some of them were Malik Raj Anand Kinga Lavinshi. Some comic programs have been offered such as “Edhak Ma’na” [Laugh with us]. News items and political analysis has been given
priority among the other programs of Hona Delhi. Among other news, Indian news was covered extensively in a weekly program called “the events of India in a week”. Other program called “A Talk” discussed political issues related to India. This program was an attempt to inform the Arab society about Indian politics as a way to counter the Pakistani propaganda. It covered different issues like “Princely States in India”, “Self-governance in the States”, “Mahatma Gandhi: his early life and Satyagraha”. Other programs offered a commentary on the world affairs. The years between 1954 and 1957 saw an expansion in the spectrum of issues to be broadcasted by Hona Delhi. It introduced programs, which dealt with different issues such as the relationship between ancient Egyptian art and ancient Indian art; Indian dances like Katkali, Baharat Natyam, and Katak; India music and Arab music and the arts of the Indian tribes. India’s Arabic broadcast got its own Arabic orchestra under the guidance of Ustaz Mahmoud Fahmi Zaki.

Hona Delhi aired special programs on India’s national occasions like India’s Republic day, Diwali, Holi and Independence War day. During this period, Hona Delhi aired many programs that informed the Egyptian listeners about India and its relationship with Egypt and the Arab world. One program introduced Indian poets such as Shah Abdel Aziz, Ghulam Azad Belegrami and Sheikh Ahmed Al Tahnsiri. Another program dealt with some Indian reformers such as Guru Nanak, Kabir and Raja Ram Mohan. Other issues that relate to India’s culture and development were broadcasted. Some of these issues were life in tea farms, cultural and social activities in India’s states, India’s external trade, and planes factory at Bangalore, the future of education in India, Indian academy, Indian culture, Bengali literature, and research institutes in India. Issues of relevance for Indo-Egyptian relations have been presented in different programs. Some of these issues were the influence of Arabic on Urdu and Persian languages, India’s contribution to Arabic literature. Another program introduced some prominent Indian women such the poet Sarojini Naidu, the warrior queen Jhansi Ki Rani and others. The features of Indian religions were explored in other programs that covered different issues like the Sufi Maqam of Nizamuddin, the

119 Different programs schedules of Hona Delhi in Sawet El Hind.
golden temple of Amritsar, the Islamic leaders of India like Shah Wali Allah Dahlwi, Sayed Shahid Ahmed Perioli, Maulana Qasim Nanotawi, Sir Sayed Ahmed Khan, and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Islamic studies in India, Islam in India, the anniversary of Buddha, Christianity in India, the birthday of Prophet Mohammed in India. Political issues received the attention of Hona Delhi also. It put on air different programs that dealt with political issues such as the Arab League, the independence of Syria, Indian constitution, Indian democracy, and the role of Asia in the world peace, the anniversary of King Saud assuming power, human rights. It also presented a drama series on Kashmir and India’s policy towards Arab causes. Among Egyptian announcers who worked at Hona Delhi in 1956 were Mahmoud Fahmi and Mohamed Ouda. Mohidduin Al Aloui, an Indian announcer, who had graduated from Al Azhar.  

The Indian Press office and publications at Cairo was one of the main tools of Indian publicity in Egypt. It supervised and edited both Sawet Al Hind and Sawet Al Sharq. It played an important role in introducing India through different means such as translating some books on India into Arabic and issuing Arabic pamphlets that explain India’s views regarding issues like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Goa. It also encouraged many Egyptian journalists and writers to write on Indian affairs. The office also arranged for both individual journalists and press delegates to visit India.

The Indian press office also established a library about Indian affairs where journalists, readers, students and writers could get access to English books on different aspects of modern India. The library allowed the students of schools, institutes and universities to borrow books. India’s permanent Committee of Press decided on 16 June 1957 to implement the idea of holding Bandung Conference for journalists that would bring together every Asian and African press association and/or board. Among other efforts for the Indian Press office was to arrange the visits of some Egyptian press delegates to India to make them aware of developments, which were taking place in India. It was also useful for India that the Egyptian journalists met people in India and were acquainted with realities. One Egyptian journalist who visited India was Ahmed Abul Fateh, Editor in Chief of Al Masri newspaper. Abul

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120 Al Namer, n.14, p.251; Al Ahram, 4 April 4, 1950.
121 Sawet Al Hind, 1 March 1952.
Fateh appreciated the simplicity of the Indian people and their deep-rooted nationalism. He saw Nehru as a great ideal for the prime ministers of East to follow. Ihsan Abdel Koudos visited India along with a delegation of Egyptian journalists. He admired Indian people and Mahatma Gandhi. Mohamed Fatehi, an advisor for the Egyptian Broadcasting Board visited India too. Kakasaheb Kalelkar, a devoted disciple of Gandhiji and President of ICCR and the Indian Institute for primary education, visited Egypt and met many Egyptian educationists. The Citizens League of Bombay organized a festival of Indo-Arab friendship on 29 June 1965, at Bombay to felicitate R.K. Karanjia, editor of Blitz, after being awarded the U.A.R. Republican Order of Merit by President Nasser. Karanjia considered the award as “an honor for the Indian people and the nation. It was a significant tribute to India”. He said India should not “divert from the policy of non-alignment, the philosophy of socialism and the establishment of the world peace”. On the other hand, Arab publicity in India was limited. Al Arab was Arab League magazine at New Delhi under Clovis Maksoud a great scholar, historian, lawyer, diplomat and an Arab nationalist who played a major role in shaping Indo-Arab relations in Nehru era. It presented Egyptian/Arab issues.

**Experts Exchange**

An aspect of cultural relations was exchanging educationists, professors and experts in different fields of education. This kept the mind debate between the two nations on.

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122 *Sawet Al Hind*, February 1953.
123 *Sawet Al Hind*, December 1952.
124 *Al Arab*, July-August 1965.
125 Ibid.
126 Ambassador Clovis Maksoud is presently Professor of International Relations and Director of the Center for the Global South at American University in Washington, DC. A Lebanese national, Dr. Maksoud was the Chief Representative of the League of Arab States in India from 1961-1966. From 1967-1979, he served as the Senior Editor of Al-Ahram and then Chief Editor of Al-Nahar Weekly. Ambassador Maksoud was appointed as the League of Arab States’ Chief Representative to the United States and the United Nations on September 1, 1979. On August 15, 1990, he submitted his resignation from the League in the aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Dr. Maksoud is the author of several articles and books on the Middle East and the global South, among them: "The Meaning of Non-Alignment," "The Crisis of the Arab Left," "Reflections on Afro-Asianism," and "The Arab Image." Born on December 17, 1928, Dr. Maksoud graduated from The American University of Beirut, went on to receive his J.D. from the George Washington University in Washington, DC and did post-graduate studies at Oxford University in Britain. URL <http://www.american.edu/maksoud/maksoud.htm> (Accessed on 10 June 2007)
127 *Al Arab*, October–November 1965.
Hassan Ibrahim, a prominent Egyptian historian and a professor of history at Fuad I university (Cairo University), visited India in December 1949, to attend the world peace conference that took place in the city of Shanti Niketin, near Calcutta. He was elected as a member of the executive committee of the conference. Prof. Ibrahim gave a talk to Calcutta Radio on the Egyptian efforts to modernize and develop Egypt. He also delivered a lecture to the students of history and the Islamic culture at Calcutta University. The first half of 1952 saw the visit of Dr. Ahmed Zaki, the then director of Foud I Council for National Research (FCNR), to India. UNESCO seized the opportunity to invite him to deliver a series of lectures in India. He toured the Indian universities and institutes in Delhi, Aligarh, Agra, Calcutta, Bangalore, Pune, and Bombay. He admired the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune, and the National Laboratory for Natural Sciences, Delhi. He considered these two laboratories as a source of pride for India. In his interview with Sawet Al Hind, Zaki explained that the reason behind India’s scientific renaissance was Jawaharlal Nehru’s study of science before studying law as well as being the graduate of Cambridge University. Zaki pointed out that India’s institutes were ahead of Egyptian universities scientifically. He also stressed the significance of scientific cooperation between India and Egypt. He also argued that such cooperation would contribute to the solution of Kashmir problem because it gave evidence that religious intolerance does not exist. Zaki called for scientific cooperation between India, and the Arab world.129

The Indian Government deputized Dr. D.N. Wadia to serve the Egyptian Government. Wadia was one of India’s prominent geologists.130 In July 1963, a five member Indian scientific delegation visited Egypt and exchanged views with the Egyptian authorities. Egypt saw areas of cooperation due to their similar conditions of development. The Indian delegation led by Dr. Hussein Zaheer, the Director General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, met the U.A.R. Minister for Scientific research and higher education. Their talks took place in the presence of some research specialists. Egypt asked the help of India in establishing Drug Research Institute. India was also urged to organize an exhibition of medical and scientific equipment in Egypt due

130 Sawet El Hind, 22 April 1957.
to demand for such equipment in the country.\textsuperscript{132} Egypt welcomed an Indian proposal for setting up a board for planning and implementing scientific cooperation between the two countries. The Egyptian Minister for scientific research expected that forming such a board would solve many problems in the scientific arena.\textsuperscript{133}

Many public figures in the arena of literature and journalism visited Egypt like Dr. Tagore, the Poet-laureate of Asia who halted in Egypt and was warmly received by King Fuad I who generously presented some rare Arabic manuscripts and books to the library of Santiniketan.\textsuperscript{134} An Egyptian journalist and writer who visited India in 1952 was Marsian Al Louzi. While she was in Mumbai, Marsian said, “I am very astonished how the Indian people could enforce the British to leave India with methods, which were never used before in the world. I wish to know how a man can achieve his goals without violence and to what extent these tools could be followed in Egypt to get rid of British”.\textsuperscript{135} Karanjia visited Egypt many times and interviewed Nasser. Heikal was a regular visitor to India also.

\textbf{The Wonders of Translation}

It is very interesting to note that the most popular book of wisdom among Arabs was originally Indian. This influential classic in Arabic literature was named “Kalila WA Demna” was translated into Arabic by Ibn Al Moqaf. It was known for its Persian origin but it seems the book was translated from its Indian language into Persian when Ibn Al Moqaf translated it from the Persian copy into Arabic. Today, Kalila WA Demna is the translation of Panchtantra, which was authored by Vishnu Sharma.\textsuperscript{136} A great achievement for Indo-Arab cultural relations was done by Wadi’ Al Bostani. He completed the translation of Indian classics into Arabic poems. These classics are Ramayana, Mahabharata and Shakuntala of Kalidasa. Al Bostani spent 40 years in translating these works that appeared in Arabic in February 1947. His motivation was that translating these classics into Arabic would help increasing understanding

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[132] ibid.
\item[133] ibid
\item[134] Nag, n.10, p.42
\item[135] Sawet El Hind, 15 February 1952.
\item[136] Thaqafatulhind, June 1951.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
between Hindus and Muslims everywhere in the world. Al Khatib, an Arab poet, composed Nala Damayanti in 1254 lines of poem.\textsuperscript{137}

India also organized an exhibition of Indian book in 1958. The exhibition was hosted for one week at India trade center in Cairo.\textsuperscript{138} India gifted Egypt some Indian handcrafts and other Indian village industries to be exhibited at the Egyptian Museum of Agriculture.\textsuperscript{139} In 1954, George Aziz, the editor of Foreign Affairs at \textit{Al Ahram}, published his book titled “Nehru”, which narrates Nehru’s biography and a chapter on India’s foreign policy.\textsuperscript{140} Mohamed Naguib inaugurated the Indo-Egyptian board in March 1954 to bring the two countries culturally closer. The board requested Wadi’ Al Bostani, a Lebanese Poet, to translate some of India’s classics into Arabic.\textsuperscript{141} Wadi’ visited India in 1952. Bostani stayed at India for two years. During this period, he visited the famous poet Rabindranath Tagore and stayed with him. He translated some of Tagore’s poems into Arabic poems. Sadly, Wadi’ passed away in 1954. Jawaharlal Nehru offered his solace for Fuad Al Bostani, the son of the late Wadi’ Al Bostani. Nehru wrote in his message to Fouad, “Because of my continuous absence of my office, I did not know but today of the demise of your late generous father. He deserved the gratefulness of India for his courtesy for what he showed of love and respect for our arts and literature. His work in translating Indian classics that took painful efforts for forty years is a clear evidence of his excellence in literature and his love to India. I wish that you may accept my solace to you and the members of your family”\textsuperscript{142}. India also expressed its interest to receive the manuscript of the translated classics in order to print cheap editions in Arabic.\textsuperscript{143} Fouad Al Bostani accepted India’s offer and signed a contract with Ali Yawar Jung, India’s Ambassador to Egypt to transfer the intellectual rights of the works of Wadi’ to India.\textsuperscript{144}

There were also occasions where some organizations contributed positively in promoting research on developing relations between the two states. The Indo-

\textsuperscript{137} \textit{Al Ahram}, 25 February, 1947
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{Sawet El Sharq}, January 1958.
\textsuperscript{139} ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} \textit{Sawet El Hind}, 25 February 1954.
\textsuperscript{141} \textit{Sawet El Hind}, 26 January 1954.
\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Sawet El Hind}, 26 January 1954.
\textsuperscript{143} ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} \textit{Sawet El Hind}, 7 September 1954.
Egyptian board organized once a competition for the best research on the aspects of economic cooperation between the Asian countries.\textsuperscript{145}

Many books were composed or translated on different issues related to India. One of these was written about Mahatma Gandhi by Mahmoud Abbas Al A’kad, a poet and writer whose writings were highly appreciated in Egypt. The Indian constitution was translated into Arabic and published in one volume. Another book titled “This is India” on India’s achievements since independence was published in Arabic and decorated with many pictures that show these achievements\textsuperscript{146}. Nadwaat Al Mosanfeen translated some of Al Namer’s books and research into Urdu. Al Namer also brought to the information of the Egyptian government the needs of the Islamic institutes in India to Arabic books and references.\textsuperscript{147} Al Namer also has published two books about India in Arabic. One of them is used among the sources of this chapter and the second about the role of Indian Muslims in liberating India.\textsuperscript{148} Ahmed Mahmud Al Sadati published his work titled “Tarikh Al Moslemeen fe Shebeh Al Qara Al Hindyia wa Hadarataha” [The history of Muslims in the Indian Subcontinent and its Civilization].\textsuperscript{149} The works of Sadati and Al Namer are the main sources in Arabic about the history of India.

Late 1958, Gamil Gaber published his study about Tagore as part of the popular Ikraa [Read] series where he gave a biography of the great poet and his philosophy. He also introduced samples of Tagore’s works and other aspects of his contribution as an artist and novelist.\textsuperscript{150} Ameen Salama and Abdel Menhem Al-Masad translated the work of Sir Atul Chatterjee titled “The New India” into Arabic.

\textbf{Arts and Cinema}

Historians often referred to the similarity between the ancient Egyptian heritage and that of India in terms of sculpture and mythology. This was a natural outcome of

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{145} Sawet El Sharq, December 1955.
  \item \textsuperscript{146} Sawet El Hind, April 1954.
  \item \textsuperscript{147} Sawet El Sharq, June 1958.
  \item \textsuperscript{148} Sawet El Sharq, June 1958.
  \item \textsuperscript{149} Sawet Al Sharq, June 1958.
  \item \textsuperscript{150} Sawet El Sharq, August 1958.
\end{itemize}
maritime contacts via Red Sea and Indian Ocean. However, this interaction has been restored in post-colonial era. Egypt participated in the international competition of painting for children, conducted by India. Fatima Darweesh and Ameena Al Said Sroor, Egyptian girls, won the prize of India’s PM for painting.\textsuperscript{151} Ismail Kamel, Egypt’s ambassador to India received the prizes from Jawaharlal Nehru on behalf of the two girls.\textsuperscript{152} Since then, the participation of Egypt in such competition became a tradition.\textsuperscript{153} On the other side, Egypt hosted an exhibition for paintings of India’s artist K.S.Kulkarni\textsuperscript{154}. Fatehy Radwan, Egypt’s Minister for Guidance visited the gallery and congratulated Kulkarni for his success. Among his works were “Three People”, “Man and Horse”, “Dancer”, “Brother and Sister”, “Silent Talk” and other works. His exhibition attracted many visitors.\textsuperscript{155} Shankar Magazine regularly held international exhibition of puppets that promote the different cultures among children. Egypt responded positively to the idea and the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism participated with 20 puppets that represented different Egyptian local cultures from different provinces like Red Sea, Oasis and others.\textsuperscript{156}

Interestingly, the first Egyptian student to complete his PhD in India was studying Indian art. Mohammed Ryiad joined Calcutta University on October 1950 and completed his PhD in January 1954. Prof. Nihar Ranjan Ray supervised Ryiad’s thesis titled “Birds and Animals in Indian Mughal Painting”. As part of his study, Ryiad visited different Indian museums in different Indian cities such as Banares, Luknow,

\textsuperscript{151} Sawet El Hind, 22 April 1957.  
\textsuperscript{152} Sawet El Sharq, April 1953.  
\textsuperscript{153} Sawet El Sharq, October 1957.  
\textsuperscript{154} K.S.Kulkarni qualified from the Sir J.J. School of Art, Bombay in 1942. He worked as a visiting Professor at the Delhi Polytechnic, Art Dep’t. From 1945 to 1962. He was the Founder member of the Delhi Shilpi Chakra in 1948. In 1962, he became the Art Director of the Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi of which he was also the Founder Member. He held several solo shows in India and abroad from 1951 to 1994. He participated in International shows at Tokyo, Paris, New York, Venice, Sao Paulo and London. He was the recipient of National and International awards. He made a mural 200ft to 50ft at Moscow for an exhibition organized by the Govt. of India. He was Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts and Head of the Dept. of Painting, Banars Hindu University from 1967-69. From 1969 to 1972, he worked as visiting Professor at the Skidmore College, New York. In 1984, he was chosen by the Govt. of India as the National Emeritus Professor for outstanding contribution in the field of art. He drew his inspiration from the folk and primitive art being it Egyptian, Indian, Mexican, Incan etc. He could work entirely within the Indian tradition with as much ease and consummate skill as he could adapt the mores of some of the Western Masters. Some of his works are available in this URL <http://www.gallerieganesha.com/kulkarn.htm> (Accessed on 23 June 2008) 
\textsuperscript{155} Sawet El Sharq, March 1958.  
\textsuperscript{156} Sawet El Hind, 22 December 1954.
Agra, and Patna. The head of the Eastern Division, in the British Museum, was one of his examiners and he praised the work of Ryiad.\textsuperscript{157}

Indian art also was the subject of study for two Egyptian artists, namely, Said Al Mansouri and his wife Nazek Hamdi. Al Mansouri did his M.A. dissertation on the relationship between Egyptian and Indian arts during pharaonic era. His dissertation was highly appreciated and recommended to be printed and distributed among Indian universities because it was proof of the ancient ties between India and Egypt. Nazek learned how to draw on the walls using Indian techniques in order to teach this art back home. They studied at Shanti Neikten University. Nazek was socially active and was elected the president for the International club at Shanti Neikten where there were representatives of twenty countries studying at Tagore University. \textsuperscript{158} Later, Jawaharlal Nehru attended the graduation ceremony of Saad Al Mansouri and his wife Nazek Hamdi. He delivered MA degree for Al Mansouri in Indian art. Nehru asked Nazek to sing an Egyptian song. Nazek sang some Egyptian folklore songs. Nehru invited the Egyptian couples to be his guests at New Delhi. Al Mansouri delivered a series of lectures on Egypt in some Indian villages. Many of the questions were about the new regime, Nasser, and the condition of Muslims in Egypt. He also gave two talks to Hona Delhi Radio on India art and its relation with Egyptian art.\textsuperscript{159} The Youth of Graduates Club played the work of Rabindranath Tagore titled Chitra. The Indian Embassy at Cairo helped the graduates to perform the play by providing them the necessary clothes and other needs. The General Ahmed Tawfiq, a member of the Arab Music Institute attended the play and offered flowers to the Egyptian actress who played the role of Chitra.\textsuperscript{160} Cairo Radio (The Second Programme of Culture) presented Chitra in drama series. Mahmoud Morsy directed it. Sameha Ayub

\textsuperscript{157} \textit{Sawet El Hind}, 10 March 1954.
\textsuperscript{158} \textit{Sawet El Sharg}, October 1957.
\textsuperscript{159} \textit{Sawet El Sharg}, March 1958.
\textsuperscript{160} In Chitra, Tagore uses a minor episode from the Mahabharata (I, 207, 1) about Arjuna's infatuation with the beautiful daughter of Chitravahana as the backdrop for his own drama. As any reader of the great epic would know, the king agrees to part with his daughter on condition that when a son is born he shall continue his, the king's, dynasty. Behind the king's request lies the tale of an entire dynasty in which, by the grace of Shiva himself, a single child was born to each of the dynastic kings. All of Chitravahana's ancestors had sons but to him a daughter was born. This girl, Chitra, was trained to behave like a son and had grown to accept her position as the king's successor. Arjuna accepts the king's demands and, according to the Mahabharata, lived with her in the city for three months. See Sawet Al Hind, 22 May 1955; URL http://wwwmcc.murdoch.edu.au/ReadingRoom/litserv/SPAN/34/Mishra2.html (Accessed on 23 June 2008).
performed the role of Chitrao Karm Matawe’h and Nazmi Rezq participated in the drama. These young actors and actresses later became famous stars in both Egyptian drama and cinema.  

Both the Indo-Egyptian board and the Arabic Music Institute sponsored the visit of the national theatre troops of India that came to Egypt in 1954. Troupes offered different dances and music that represent different traditional dances and various kinds of music, which belong to different states in India. President Mohamed Naguib received the Indian artists at his office and gifted each one of them his signed photo. He also attended their concert. On 28 November 1954, Gam’aat Mohbi Al Fenoon Al Gamila [The Society of Fine Arts’ lovers] organized an exhibition of Indian Arts through history. Kamaluddin Hussein, minister of education and a member of the free officers group inaugurated the exhibition in the presence of Sobho Tagore, son of Rabindmath Tagore. The displayed works were varied like handwriting copy of the Holy Qu’ran that belonged to 16th century; some Bronze statues that belonged to 6th century; and some pieces of Indian contemporary art. In July 1958, India participated in the Exhibition of Asian Artists for Drawing on Crystal. The Indian works were highly appreciated by the Egyptians. Reda Troupe visited India in 1964. Indian audiences were impressed with the performances. According to the Indian Express, “...and no one who sees the Reda dancers now will quite be able to keep his heart and not a little hopelessly, and willingly, lose it to the young Arab dancers... they are irresistible charmers”. Among dancers were Mahmoud Reda, the Egyptian genius who gave his name for the troupe and his pretty troupe mate Farida Fahmi. It is to be noted that the interaction between Indian music in north India and Arab music was strong. This would explain why it is easy to change only words and use the same music while it still popular in both India and Egypt. A recent example of that the song of Amr Dyab, a contemporary Egyptian singer, called “Tamli Maa’k” [Always with you].

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161 Sawet EI Sharg, April 1958. Karm Matawe’h is a very famous Egyptian actor today and Sameha Ayub is a long celebrated star in both singing and acting.
162 Sawet EI Hind, 10 March 1954.
163 Sawet EI Hind, December 1954.
164 Sawet EI Hind, July 1958.
165 Al Arab, 1 December 1964.
166 Sawet Al Sharg, August 1958.
The similarity between Indian and Egyptian movies during 1950s and 1960s are striking. It is the different language and Sari that allowed the audience to distinguish between an Indian and Egyptian one. This could partially explain the popularity of the Indian movies in Egypt. The role of the Indian diplomatic mission and the different tools of India's cultural diplomacy were very important in enabling Egyptian masses watching Indian movies. However, the Egyptian movies did not attain the same amount of popularity. Egypt's cultural diplomacy in India was not well-planned or extensive enough to produce the desirable result. Much of the good will among Indians towards Egypt today is the result of the Indians' study of Egypt's history and civilization more than being the result of the Egyptian cultural diplomacy. It is sad that neither Egypt nor any other Arab country has a cultural center at New Delhi or any other Indian city. Ahmed Ezat Abdel Latif wrote soon after he came back from India in 1955 that, "I felt in this discussion how our Indian brothers have a sincere interest in what is going on in Egypt. I also discovered that they lack true information about what is going on in reality in Egypt. The responsibility of that lies on the Egyptian officials who ignored the need to provide the Indian people with access to true information about Egypt. It would be fortunate if the Egyptian authorities would establish a cultural bureau in India provided that spreading true knowledge about Egypt among Indians would be its main task" 167

However, Egypt has a long history of participation at many film festivals. The Ministry of Education deputized its General Inspector of Social and Sportive Activities, Mohammed Fatehi Bey in 1952 to represent Egypt at the International Film Festival that took place in Bombay.168 Egypt participated with four cultural movies, the film of *Ibn Al Nil* [The Son of Nile], the film of *Lailat Gharam* [A Night of Romance].169 In an interview with Fatehi Bey, he told Sawet El Hind that the Film Festival helped to introduce Egypt to the Indians and vice-versa. He pointed out that Egyptian movies as well as its music and the Indians because of the similarity between India and Egypt in moral, emotional and living values appreciated songs. He did not feel himself out of Egypt while in India and appreciated the good will among the Indians towards Egypt. During the visit, both Indian and Egyptians filmmakers

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167 *Sawet El Hind*, December 1955.
168 *Sawet El Hind*, 1 February 1952.
169 *Sawet El Hind*, 1 April 1952.
and producers agreed to exchange films. He also had talks with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to exchange experience on the educational systems at India and Egypt, and the social and sportive activities at their schools.

*Lailat Gharam* has a very profound impact among the Indians for its social and emotional dimensions. The movie based on the novel of Mohamed Abdel Halim Abdullah, an Egyptian novelist, titled "*Lakita*" that was written in 1945. The appearance of Magda, an Egyptian actress, attracted the Indian audience because her beauty was similar to Indian beauty. Because of that, there was an idea of producing a joint Indo-Egyptian movie where Magda would play the role of an Egyptian girl who meets an Indian young officer while in Egypt at a party of an Indian brigade during the Second World War. Magda would appreciate the heroism and nationalism of this Indian officer and his advocacy for the freedom of both India and Egypt from British colonialism. Magda, while commenting on the idea, appreciated the idea, as that would further strengthen relations “between us and our Indian brothers”. She also added that the opening of the Indian market for Egyptian movies would help in developing and flourishing of the cinema industry in Egypt. She saw the idea as an opportunity for her to represent Egyptian women in India and gain experience on how Indian women struggled for its rights, which would have its impact on empowering the Egyptian feminist movement.

The Indian Embassy used to lend Indian films to schools, clubs, and other cultural and social associations to be screened free of charge. The embassy would also provide the screening tools and technicians for this purpose. The themes of these films were various and informative of India such as the art of dance, music, tobacco industry, temples, Kashmir, Hindu and Muslim festivals. These Indian movies were popular among the Egyptians because of its high morality and human nature, according to Abdel Jawad Abu Saa’da, “Indian movies are a true picture of the values and habits of Indian people. It excelled in introducing social topics as an attempt to preach good … These movies reflect the manners and character of Indian woman, who is so honest,
loyal in her feeling and so willing to sacrifice her life in maintaining her family ... this is evidence that Indian women have very high manners .... Therefore, I see that these movies are completely successful in accomplishing their mission\textsuperscript{175}

**Conclusion**

 Trade and political relations were the carriers of cultural contacts and ideas between India and Egypt. However, political relations were interrupted but trade and culture continued to flow between the two countries due to their own dynamics. This continued until the Western powers succeeded in recognizing a way to India and rebel against the monopoly of Indian trade by Egyptian and Arabs. The Western powers used its military might to cut the Indo-Egyptian /Arab trade ties. Soon, British colonialism took over India and Egypt and created barriers between them as a way to implement the imperial wisdom of "Divide and Rule". This undermined the political and economic relations between the two nations. As a result, their cultural ties were affected negatively. However, there were few attempts from both sides to break down these isolation barriers and those were resisted the British. The end of colonial period saw the revival of political and cultural relations. During the study period, India, on one hand, succeeded in achieving its cultural goals in Egypt through influencing how Egyptian elite and masses looked upon India. Egyptians were appreciative with India that faced its partition on the eve of its independence. They saw India as an Asian giant that played a very positive role in serving the interests of the Third world countries. Although, Egypt did not have any specific cultural policy in India, it earned the image of non-aligned and secular country who is a friend of India.

Egyptian students, scholars and teachers, who spent long time in India, had a deep impact on how Egyptian society saw India. They taught at the universities, authored books and wrote in the newspapers. They acted as a cultural Ambassadors of Indian culture. The same impact was not seen in case of Indian students who had been to Egypt as most of them studied Arabic and taught in India where their audience circles were only the learners of Arabic and religious knowledge. Al Azhar and ICCR played very important role in cementing cultural ties between India and Egypt. The Indian

\textsuperscript{175} Sawet El Sharq, April 1958.
and Egyptian diplomats/scholars shared a common desire to develop the cultural bonds that linked the two countries.

In their struggle to cement their cultural ties, Egypt and India deployed different tools like signing cultural treaties and its executive programmes; holding cultural exhibitions; exchanging dance troupes, movies and books; and encouraging publicity about India in Egypt and vice versa. India also encouraged Arab studies at different Indian universities. The similar historical developments and circumstances of both nations produced similarities in ideas and wide exchange of them among the Egyptian and Indian thinkers and reformers. This similarity stands true even in the realm of cinema, music and art. What great tribute can be paid to the intimate cultural relations between India and Egypt that even today it is the custom in Egypt to name the fairest girl as Hind to reflect the image of rich and beautiful India that remains lasting in the minds of the Egyptians176 In sum, the period under study saw not only the golden era in terms of political relations but also golden era of cultural relations between India and Egypt.

176 See Chopra, n.13.